SMOKE SIGNALS

Volume 42/Number 11 October 2010

1959 /LLINOIS

Administration's Message

Dear Residents:

As we transition from summer to fall, we note the changes occurring around us, adjust to them and move on. It is a new season and the calendar, like the clock, moves on. The weather is cooler now so we may wear a sweater or light jacket. It is getting darker earlier so we turn the lights on sooner. Our students are back in school bringing on new or increased demands on our schedules. In response to these demands on our time or changes in circumstances, we adapt our routines to accommodate our different needs. Whatever other changes may have occurred in your daily lives, please note that you have made adjustments and have moved on with your new routines. In moving forward, you likely have kept your basic habits but adopted new practices that are more suited to your current situation. I am sure most of you would agree that a refusal to adjust your customs to the new circumstances by rigidly holding on to the old ways is a formula for failure. Common sense tells us all that we must adjust to new circumstances just as evolution has allowed man and animal to cope with changing conditions. One constant in life is change. As things change, we make changes to cope and move forward. Such is the case with your village government. Just like the changes we all have made in adjusting from summer to fall, in order to continue to move forward, our Village must adapt to changing conditions and use new tools to meet new challenges. The home rule referendum concerns just such a tool!

Our Village finances have been at the forefront of our concerns for quite some time. As you know, the VBT has voted to place a "home rule" referendum on the ballot this November. The nation's economy has declined, Village revenues are down, and there is the possibility that other changes may occur at the State level that will worsen our local situation. Just like in our daily lives, the Village must adapt to new circumstances in order to cope and move forward. When it comes to Village finances, the VBT and I believe that the flexibility provided by having home rule authority is just such an adjustment that appears prudent to take at this time. You will have the opportunity to vote on this important step at the election on November 2nd. In order to find out more about home rule and why the VBT believes this to be in our best interests, please come to the Special Village Board Town Hall meeting on Thursday, October 21, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at the Village Hall.

It is a crucial time for the Village and our community's ability to operate in and cope with the constantly changing eco-

nomic and financial situation that affects all of us. Because the law provides that home rule referendums may be presented to the voters only once every 23 months, it is imperative that all of us be informed about home rule. We must understand the impact it can make on our Village going forward if successful and the ramifications if not successful.

To give you a basic understanding about "home rule", the following position paper provides an overview and highlights several important points. Please take time to read this and come to the Town hall meeting.

HOME RULE INFORMATION PAPER

The material provided in this paper is intended to assist Indian Head Park residents in their understanding of "home rule" so that they will be better informed when casting their ballots concerning the "home rule" referendum at the November 2, 2010 election.

1. What is "home rule"?

Home rule is the name given to describe the extent of authority that a local municipality may exercise in connection with municipal activities. A local municipality is either a "home rule" community or a "non-home rule" community. Pursuant to the 1970 Illinois Constitution, Article VII, Section 6, home rule allows greater decision making authority on the local level allowing local municipalities to find local solutions to local problems without dependence on the Illinois General Assembly. This is in contrast to "non-home rule".

The authority of a non-home rule municipality to operate is limited under a doctrine referred to as "Dillon's Rule". Simply put, Dillon's Rule means that without an express statutory power to act granted by the Illinois General Assembly, a "non-home rule" unit of local government generally cannot act. Thus, if Illinois statutes are silent on a topic that is the subject of possible municipal action, the non-home rule community may not take that action. Where matters may be unclear, the presumption is that if not specifically authorized, a non-home rule unit of government may not act. Indian Head Park is a non-home rule municipality.

Home rule municipalities, on the other hand, are not limited in this manner. Home rule municipalities are freed of "Dillon's Rule" for most actions such as financial matters. Under the 1970 Illinois Constitution, Article VII, Section 6(a) [Powers of Home Rule Units] a "home rule unit may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its govern-

Message continued from page 1

ment and affairs including, but not limited to, the power to regulate for the protection of the public health, safety, morals and welfare; to license; to tax; and to incur debt." Thus, a home rule unit of government is presumed to have the authority to act on matters even where Illinois statutes are silent on the matter.

2. How does a Village become "home rule"?

The 1970 Illinois Constitution created three categories of home rule units: (1) Cook County; (2) any municipality that has a population in excess of 25,000; (3) a municipality that elects by referendum to become a home rule unit.

Thus, because Indian Head Park does not fall within either of the first two categories listed above, the residents must approve a referendum to become home rule. The village board of trustees voted at its August 12, 2010 meeting to place a home rule referendum on the ballot at the election to be held on November 2, 2010.

3. What nearby communities have already adopted "home rule" by referendum?

Berkeley (pop. 4,913) Countryside (pop. 5,795) Hodgkins (pop. 2,014) Northlake (pop. 11,462)

Bridgeview (pop. 14,991) Hillside (pop. 8,341) McCook (pop. 237) Oakbrook Terrace (pop. 2,221)

Stickney (pop. 5,774)

4. Why is Indian Head Park considering "home rule"?

During the past two fiscal years, the village has suffered a shortfall in revenues stemming from the nation's poor economy and may further suffer due to the budget crisis in Illinois. Indian Head Park's current fiscal year budget reflects a deficit of \$125,000 that includes cutbacks in spending (e.g. no employee pay raises) and services (e.g. no leaf pick-up program) and postponements in municipal projects (e.g.

paving streets in various sections of town like Ashbrook and Arrowhead Trail). The village board of trustees has attempted to address these matters by seeking additional revenues without seeking to raise property taxes.

Although village finances are not desperate, the critical point has been reached. The village needs to enhance revenues but is limited, as a non-home rule community, to either seek additional revenue solely through a property tax increase or to become a home rule municipality and obtain authority to use alternative methods of raising revenue without sole reliance on property taxes. The village board of trustees has unanimously decided to place a home rule referendum on the ballot for the election on November 2, 2010. Thus, home rule would provide the village with additional flexibility and local control for maintaining the character of our community. It would enhance the village's ability to preserve the integrity of its zoning ordinances, to operate in a more cost-effective manner, and to have a more diversified and flexible revenue base that could reduce dependency on property taxes.

5. What are the potential benefits of "home rule"?

Becoming a home rule community, would allow the village board of trustees to meet unexpected challenges and to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities (e.g. grant money, low interest loans) quickly and decisively for our common good. By becoming a home rule community, Indian Head Park would have the ability to timely tailor legislation to specifically address a local need, problem, or concern. The mayor and Village Board of Trustees are more knowledgeable and sensitive to local matters, and are more accountable to Indian Head Park residents than legislators elected across the entire state. Further, there would be an increased ability to regulate activities in the areas of economic development, building, zoning, sanitation, nuisance, civil disturbance, public health, and safety and welfare. Significantly, the village

Advertisement

Your Ashbrook Specialist ...

Put 40+ years of real estate experience in the Western Suburbs to work for you!

Pat Lehman CRS, GRI 630/586-7440





continued on page 3

VILLAGE OF INDIAN HEAD PARK

201 Acacia Drive, Indian Head Park, IL 60525 (708) 246-3080

www.indianheadpark-il.gov

Office Hours

Mon., Tues., Wed. and Fri 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and

Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Closed Saturday, Sunday and Holidays

Mayor: Richard S. Andrews

Trustees: Deborah A. Anselmo Carol Coleman

Brian T. Bailey Norman L. Schnaufer Anne Bermier Matthew P. Walsh II

Village Clerk: Joseph V. Consolo

Chief of Police/

Administrator: Frank Alonzo, Jr.

Police Dept. Non-Emergency 246-4534

Emergency 9-1-1 Non-Emergency 352-9229

Fire Dept. Non-Emergency 352-9: Emergency 9-1-1

Message continued from page 2

would have the ability to enhance revenues through locally administered taxes rather than solely through property taxes.

6. What are the potential disadvantages of "home rule"?

A criticism of home rule is that it will result in higher property taxes. Home rule permits greater local control over decision making without state oversight and certain procedural limitations and with fewer restrictions. According to a survey conducted by NIU in 2002, home rule authority leads to LOWER property taxes by allowing home rule communities to diversify the tax base through reliance on less onerous sources of tax revenue and by raising some revenue from non-residents.

According to the study, on average State-wide, all cities and villages derive about 25% to 30% of their revenues from property taxes while home rule communities derive 10% to 20% of their revenue from property taxes. Currently, non-home rule IHP obtains about 28% of its revenue through property taxes.

7. How does home rule affect other taxing districts like schools?

If Indian Head Park became a home rule municipality, there would be no impact on the school districts or other independent units of government. Home rule authority in Indian Head Park would only apply to Indian Head Park.

8. If the home rule referendum is approved, how will it affect Indian Head Park residents?

The village board of trustees will have the flexibility to explore a variety of alternative revenue sources to balance future budgets and fund needed infrastructure improvements and village services without total reliance on property tax increases. Thus, the character and value of our community can be preserved and enhanced.

9. Are there any time limits that apply to "home rule"?

A referendum to seek home rule authority may be placed before the voters once every 23 months. Thus, if the home rule referendum is not approved, property tax increases will remain the primary source of additional revenue.

Given the lead time to put alternate revenue enhancement sources in place and the time lag before additional revenue is accumulated to make a difference, approximately three or four more years of financial concerns would be likely.

10. Where can I learn more about "home rule" and its impact on Indian Head Park?

A special Village Board Town hall meeting will be held on Thursday, October 21, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at the Village Hall.

Respectfully,

Richard S. Andrews mayor

Scheduled Meeting Dates

Village Board of Trustees 7:30 p.m.:

Thursday, October 14, 2010 (Regular Board Meeting) Thursday, October 21, 2010 (Special Townhall Meeting)

Planning and Zoning Commission 7:30 p.m.:

Tuesday, October 5, 2010

Fire/Police Commission 7:00 p.m.:

Thursday, November 4, 2010

E-911 Board 6:30 p.m.:

No meetings scheduled at this time.

All meetings are held at the Municipal Facility at 201 Acacia Drive, All residents are welcomed!

TRADING POST

Alterations... Experienced with silks, woolens, ultrasuede and leathers. Hems, zippers, buttons replaced, and bedspread repairs. Heirloom christening gowns, etc. Call Jean Weekley at (708) 246-6635.

For Sale.... Dark brown mink stroller jacket. Size 8/10. Call Joan at (708) 246-5209.

Condo in (near everything) - 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Scottsdale Pools/tennis. Available November, December, January. Please call (708) 246-7795 or (425) 641-1619.

Advertisements

CARPENTER

Looking for small jobs 40 years experience



Call Bob 708-246-0164



M & M CEMENT CONSTRUCTION

(708) 425-4452

Sidewalks, driveways, patios, foundations retaining walls, concrete steps, garage floors tuckpointing, brick work.

No job too small.

Advertisements

JOHN C. SKREKO, DDS, MAGD

Master Academy of General Dentistry Fellow Academy of General Dentistry Fellow Academy of Dentistry International Fellow International College of Dentists

- Serving the community over thirty years.
- Call for an appointment.
- Most procedures performed.
- Comprehensive care for the family including implants.

6961 VINE STREET, SUITE #A INDIAN HEAD PARK, IL 60525 708-246-1263



Rose Mary Woodley, ABR Real Estate Broker Associate Direct 630-586-7450





Heritage Center Library Annual Book Sale

The annual book sale will be held at the Indian Head Park Heritage Center, at 6250 Wolf Road on Saturday, October 16, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



All proceeds to benefit the Heritage Center. Paperback books will be sold for 25 cents each and hard cover books at \$1.00 and up. If you have any questions, please contact Jane Kuhn at (708) 246-0293.

Advertisement



Full Service Beauty Shop Styling for Men, Women & Children

246-8680

6934 Wolf Road • Indian Head Park, IL 60525 in Indian Head Park Shopping Center (Where 66 & Wolf Road Meet)

Hours: Mon.-Sat. 9-5 • Thurs. 9-7 • Closed Sundays

Frank DeLaurentis, owner

Bring in a friend!
Recommend a new client and
you will both receive a 20%
discount off any service.

NOTE: Not valid with any other offers.



Printed on recycled paper

Postal Customer Indian Head Park, Illinois 60525

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
Paid
Indian Head Park, IL
Permit No. 203

